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THE LIMA PIECES  
OF  
GEORGE II  
OF  
ENGLAND

By  
R. I. NESMITH

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## FOREWORD

Conjecture and opinion combine to make a fascinating game, one which occasionally and happily proves truly rewarding. Whenever supported by evidence — indicative if not conclusive — it is a game which becomes even more the siren.

Perhaps Mr. Nesmith's monograph on *The Lima Pieces of George II of England* may well stand as an example, to all intents and purposes classic, of conjecture per se, because here we have opinion based on facts so far as they are known, and beyond that we have considered judgment. Whether or not the Lima Pieces were so indicated logically is perhaps a matter never to be proved, but Nesmith's account of this numismatical question mark, with his opinions, is good reading.

Because it is good reading and because we have reason to believe this a generally held opinion, we feel that there is a real purpose in republishing this monograph which first appeared in the Journal in 1944. We hope that you will concur in this belief and herewith let the story speak for itself.

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## THE LIMA PIECES OF GEORGE II OF ENGLAND

BY R. I. NESMITH

With illustrations of the coins and other historical plates

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# The LIMA pieces of George II of England

By R. I. NESMITH



Nearly every collector of coins has come across the English George II coins bearing "LIMA" under the bust. The story behind this coinage is one of the most thrilling in sea history. The bullion from which the "LIMA" coins were struck was captured from the Spanish by Commodore Anson in one of the toughest cruises on record.

Some confusion exists as the bullion has been assigned as coming from two different cruises. Edw. Hawkins, in his source book "The Silver Coins of England" says, "they were struck from the silver which was captured, according to Mr. Pollet, by the Prince Frederic and Duke, privateers. According to other authorities they were coined from the silver captured by Lord Anson in the Acapulco galleon. The former tradition is the more probable [says Hawkins] for Acapulco is the capital of Mexico and Lima which is the capital of Peru, would very inconsistently be inscribed upon Mexican silver."

"It is curious that this point has never been settled," says another English writer Lieut. Col. H. W. Morrieson, R.A., in the *Brit. Numis. Journal* Vol. IV. P. 11, 1907. "To me, it appears more likely that the specie so obtained by an official expedition, [Anson's] would be specially marked, rather than

that captured by two obscure privateers. No better name could have been selected than LIMA, the chief town on that part of the Pacific Coast of America where Anson so successfully flaunted his country's flag."

As this article is not an attempt to prove either theory and is really the saga of Anson, I will briefly state the opposite possible source of the bullion.

The English privateers Duke and Prince Frederick under Comm. James Talbot took the French ships *Marquis d'Antin* and *Louis Erasme*. A consort the *Notre Dame de Deliverance* escaped. The three French treasure ships were homeward bound from Peru and even had bars of gold stowed in the lining of their sides.

Forty-five wagons were needed to carry the treasure from Bristol to London and progress through the country with guards and flags flying was like a triumphal procession. Each seaman's prize money came to 850 l. but few of them got it due to the activity of the press gang who shanghaied most of them before they could collect. The lucky merchants in London who backed the trip divided 700,000 l. This was in 1745, the Scottish rebellion had broken out and the money was offered as a loan to the Government.





*Commodore George Anson;  
Rear Admiral of the Blue.*

Most of the bullion from both cruises came from Peru. The capture of the Manila ship from Acapulco, Mexico by Anson, however had so much publicity that the fact that his other prizes were all taken off the coast of Peru has evidently been generally overlooked.

As both lots arrived in England about the same time, Anson's in 1744 and the other in 1745, could not the Lima pieces have been struck from both lots?

**The Saga of Comm. Anson and  
the Centurian  
1740-1744**

*From newspaper, magazine, and eye witness accounts of the period.*

Appearing in the London Gazette for Nov. 1st, 1744 was this news item: "Yesterday the crew of the Centurion receiv'd 300 l. one s. each, as part of their Prize Money; after which about

forty of them attended by fiddlers, bagpipers, etc. with cockades in their hats, went to Stratford to regale themselves."

This is the last news item of the year that I can find about the cruise of the *Centurion* around the world under the command of Comm. Anson, and thereby hangs a tale. There were few left however to tell it. One member of the crew ends his narrative of the voyage thus:

"Friday 15, [June 1744] Little winds and clear. At four in the morning we weighed and made Sail, and at ten we arriv'd at St. Helen's, fill'd with the greatest Joy and Pleasure, to find ourselves arriv'd at our native Country, after the many Hardships and Difficulties we had undergone during our Absence from it; for out of two thousand Men we carried out, not near two hundred came back, and those in a bad State of Health."

The *Centurion* that brought back this handful of hardy mariners after one of the toughest and most exciting voyages in the history of the sea, also brought back booty amounting to about \$6,000,000 in bullion captured from the Spaniards. From this silver and gold the George II pieces stamped LIMA were minted.

England was at war with France and Spain. Admiral Vernon had taken Porto Bello and the English wanted to follow up his success. The Admiralty realized that in addition to the West Indies, the Spaniards were very formidable in the Pacific. An expedition was planned under the command of Comm. Anson to attack their trade there, the original scheme being that Anson reach Panama and join hands with Vernon across the Isthmus.

After long delays and great difficulties Anson obtained six ships, headed by the *Centurion* of 60 guns and manned by the sweepings from jails and invalids from the marine hospitals, many of them over 70 years of age. One writer says that of the cripples that were able to

crawl away about 250 of them deserted before arriving at the dock to sail.

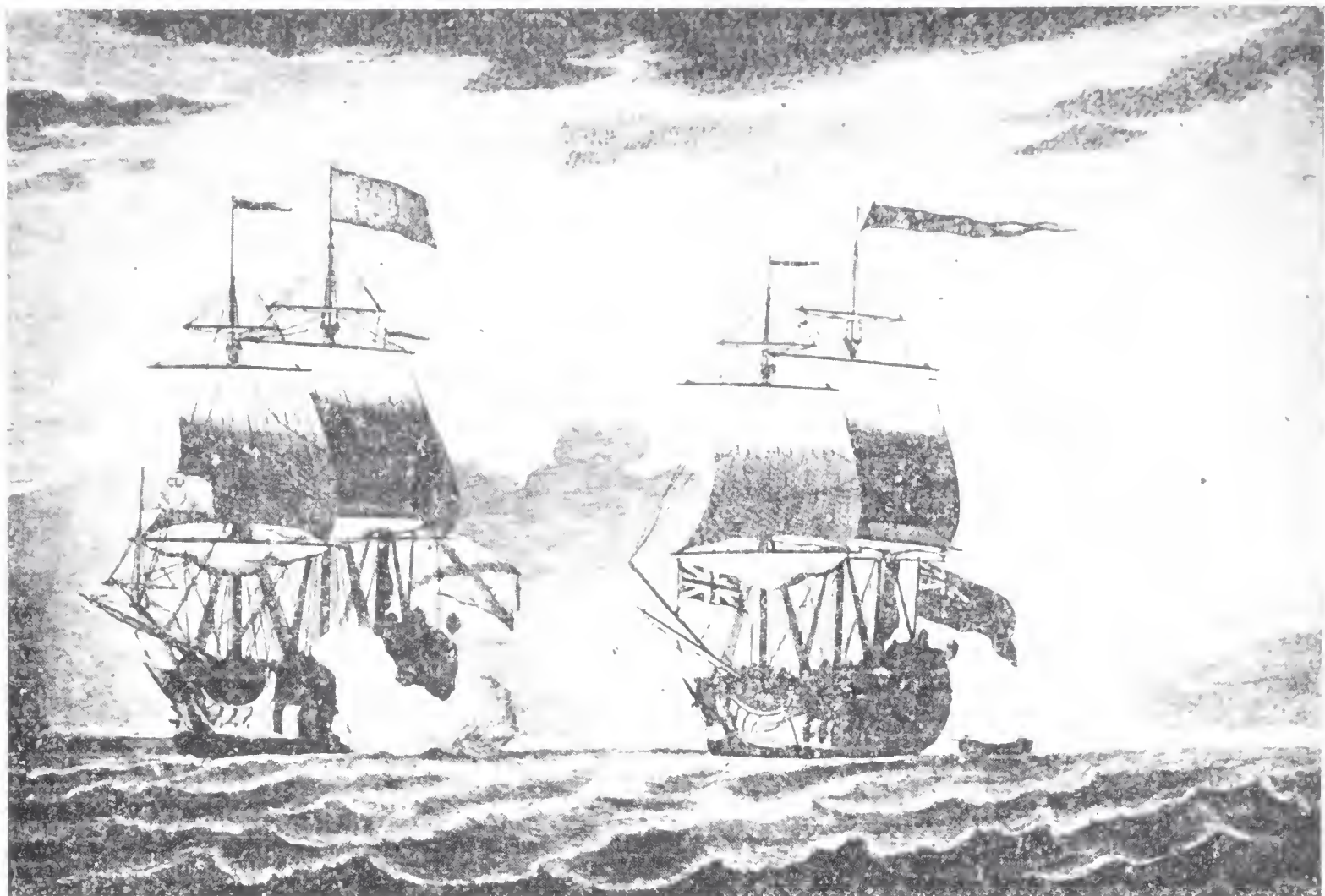
After three false starts due to rough weather the fleet of six ships of war with two victuallers sailed on Sept. 18th, 1740. The ships were; the *Centurion*, *Gloucester*, *Severn*, *Pearl*, *Wager* and sloop *Trial*, with the victuallers *Industry* and *Anne*.

The expedition had been so long getting ready that the Spaniards were completely aware of the expedition and its condition. Fitting out a Spanish fleet to catch and destroy the English, they laughingly claimed they would make short work of Anson's "floating hospitals." The Spanish fleet never caught up with Anson and came to a sad end before they passed the Straits of Magellan.

The passage round the Horn almost wiped out Anson's fleet. The *Wager* was wrecked in the Straits and its story is famous. The *Severn* and the *Pearl* lagged behind, never passed the Cape and turned back into the Atlantic. The *Centurion*, the *Gloucester*, the *Trial* and the *Anne* fought their way through terrible weather, with men dying from scurvy daily, and reached the Island of Juan Fernandez in pitiable condition.

To the crews that lived that far, Juan Fernandez must have looked like Heaven. "This island was a Happy Haven to us, our water being near expended, our Men reduced from 518 or 512 to about 213, [in the *Centurion*], out of whom about 130 were sick and very weak, and the rest, with long Fatigue and the Inclemency of the Weather, almost useless. With the other Ships it was worse, the *Gloucester* people being reduced from 400, to about 96, and almost all sick and helpless; but after our Arrival here, the healthful Air and Refreshments soon recovered all who were not too far gone in the Distempers contracted in this fatal Run: How the rest of our Voyage will prove must be left to Providence and Time to determine."





Commodore Anson in the *Centurion* capturing the Spanish ship  
*Nuestra Señora de Cavadongo* 1743

After a three months stay to recuperate and short cruises in a search for the missing ships of the squadron:

"Sept. 7, 1741. At eight this Morning we saw a Sail in the offing, we had then our Top-masts struck, but immediately hoisted them, bent our Sails, and slipt our Cables, . . . and gave her Chace; on the next Day we lost sight of her, but in a little Time after we saw another Sail, and gave Chace, and came up with her and took her: we brought her back to Juan Fernandez, where we arrived on the Fourteenth." This was their first prize.

"She proved to be a rich Merchant Ship, having on board eight thousand Pounds Sterling in Dollars and Plate, with some jewels, an abundance of Gold and Silver Twist, etc. but the bulk of her Cargo consisted in Sugars and Bale Goods, most of the latter European,

but some the produce of the Countrey. She was called the Nostra Signora del Buona Carmello. She had on board thirteen Passengers, most of them Persons of Fortune, among whom was the Son of the Governor of the City of St. Jago, the Capital of Chili. She came from Callao a Port of the City of Lima, the Capital of the Empire of Peru, bound for Valparaiso in Chile; where those Ships annually trade with their commodities, Silver being scarce in Chile; and bring principally in Return Gold and Corn, the latter being very scarce in Peru: and some of the Prisoners informed us that if we had taken them in their Return from Chile to Peru, we should have met with as large, if not a larger Quantity of Gold as we had now Silver.

"We found in this Ship, on a Search among the letters from several Merchants in Lima to their Friends in Chile,

an account of the Fate of the Spanish Squadron which had been sent after us, viz. that in attempting to pass the Cape they had been forced to put back, after encountering the most terrible Storms and most pressing Famine . . . being reduced to two ounces of Bread and half a Pint of Water a Day for one Man . . . ; their Masts, Sails, Yards, Rigging and Hulls shattered and torn to Pieces, the Admiral Pizarro and one more of his Squadron, with the greatest Difficulty got to Buenos Ayres: That one of them a Ship of seventy Guns, had been entirely lost near Rio Grande, and the other two never heard of. Those letters came overland from Buenos Ayres to Lima, with others containing Admiral Pizarro's advice and Instructions to the Viceroy of Peru . . . wherein he told him, that though he himself had been forced back in such a miserable Condition . . . yet he did believe some of us possibly might get round . . . in a very weak and defenceless Condition; he advised the Viceroy to equip and fit out all the Strength of Shipping he could and send them to cruise at the Island of Juan Fernandez, where we must of Necessity touch to refresh our People and repair our Ships; and advised in case of meeting us, they should not stand to fight or cannonade at a Distance, but board us at once Sword in Hand; which if well executed in our weak condition, they must infallibly take us.

"This was a well-laid Scheme for our Ruin and the Viceroy fitted out three Ships at Callao, of 50, 30 and 20 guns, all double mann'd with the choicest Men they could possibly procure and sent them to wait for us with orders that they should spare none, but put us all to the Sword without any Distinction. Those Ships arrived at Juan Fernandez in May and continu'd till about June the 6th, when imagining we must either be put back or lost, they quitted their Station and sailed for the Port of Conception in Chile; by which means we happily miss'd meeting them or we must

in all human Probability have fallen Victims to their Cruel Resolves."

Leaving Juan Fernandez, the Gloucester was ordered to destroy the Anne, and then cruise off the Town of Payta, "which is the Place where the Ships between Lima and Panama generally touch at to put out Part of their Cargoes for inland Parts of Peru." The prize Carmello was provisioned and manned and put to sea with the Centurion, following the sloop Trial.

The next Spanish prize was taken by the Trial which was in such a leaky condition that Anson ordered her destroyed, and transferred her officer's and crew to the Spanish ship, naming her the "Trial's Prize." By the Spanish she was called the Nostra Signora de Arinzazie, and was the largest ship taken in the South Seas. [By one writer she is called Arranzazu, by another Arransaso, Aransace, etc. a common variation of names appearing through different narratives due to phonetic spelling. Take your choice].

"This Prize had on board 506 lb. weight of Silver, and a twelve Pound weight of Gold, and two Chests of wrought Plate, being a set of curious Plate lately purchased for a Church, with several costly Images of Saints finely wrought, and near two Foot long which we afterwards beat up close to make them lye snug in the Chests." Another author says "about 4000 l. in Specie or wrought Silver."

Cruising along the coast of Chile, the Centurion took a small ship, the Santa Teresa de Jesus. Although the specie on board was only "small silver money not amounting to more than 170 l. Sterling, her cargo was of great value but we could not dispose of it, the Spaniards having orders never to ransom their ships."

The prize had on board as passengers a Spanish woman and her two daughters, the eldest about twenty-one and the youngest about fourteen, with three





British warships under Anson's Command plundering Payta (Northern Peru) in 1741

negro slaves as attendants. The women naturally alarmed "at the riotous disposition which they expected to find in a set of sailors who had not seen a woman for nearly a twelve month." locked themselves in their cabin. The gallant Spanish pilot declared that he was married to the youngest, [reported the most beautiful] in order to protect them and the Commodore permitted him to keep them in their own quarters on their own ship. One writer says Anson had the Spanish Captain and the women to dine with him every day which "generous Treatment from an Enemy had such an effect on the Captain, that he informed the Commodore how he might plunder the Town of Payta, which tho' but a small Town, was very rich; and likewise offer'd to conduct his Men. Accordingly the Commodore accepted his offer, and we steer'd a course for that Place" [This

sounds like scuttlebut to the compiler].

This was a busy period as soon after the Carmen was captured. She had left Payta the day before for Callao with a very valuable cargo of iron and cloth and on board was an Irishman named John Williams. He was in rags having been in Payta jail for some misdemeanor but told a good story of having traveled all over Mexico as a peddler, and that after amassing 4 or 5 thousand dollars, the priests found out he had money and stripped him of all he had. "He informed us that in the Port of Payta there was a Bark which was taking in four hundred thousand Dollars, with which she would sail for Panama in a Day or two at farthest; and the Spanish prisoners being examined and confirming the Intelligence . . . the Commodore resolved to attack this very night."



"We sent our Barge, Pinnace and Trial's Pinnace to attack the Town of Payta by Surprise. They had forty-nine Men well arm'd and commanded by Lieuts. Brett, Dennis and Hughes. About ten we entered the Harbour, undiscovered by the Fort and vessels there and landed. The Fort had 8 Guns mounted, which commanded the Town and Harbour and the Balcony of the Governor's House, which again Commanded the Fort was lined with arm'd Men, of which there might be about 400 in the Town. We were no sooner ashore but some march'd or rather run to the Fort, shooting every Person they met which alarm'd the Fort; and they, firing upon us with small Arms kill'd one Man and wounded seven" [another author says, "we lost one man and two wounded . . . our Men ran to the Attack and fired in so irregular a manner, that it was a Doubt whether those were not shot by our own People rather than by the Enemy"] Quoting the "By Authority" narrative of Richard Walters "the Honourable Mr. Kepple, son of the Earl of Albemarle had on a jockey cap, one side of the peak was shaved off close to his temple by a ball which did him no other injurv" which leads this compiler to believe that some sailor popped at the Hon. Kepple and missed.

The Spaniards fled for the mountains, including the Governor, "leaving his wife, a young Lady of about seventeen years of age, to whom he had been married but two or three days, behind him; though she afterwards was carried off in her shift by a couple of centinels, just as our detachment arrived before it." English colours were hoisted and the sailors, completely out of hand, raised Cain around town.

"At the Governor's House there was a very large Pier Glass in a fine carved and gilt Frame, of a considerable Value, and having found some Wine and Glasses there, we drank Confusion to our Enemies, with Success likewise to our Voyage, and afterwards flung the

Glasses at it, and broke it all to Pieces. In the mean while, some had taken Possession of the other Houses, and hung out for their Signs a Gold lac'd Coat, a Waistcoat, a Hat, and the like, for all were publick Houses now; some made themselves Admirals, by putting on a Gold or Silver lac'd suit over their own Cloaths." [Lieut. Brett had a hard time recognizing some of his men when they appeared regaled in women's gowns and petticoats with bonnets and wigs on their heads.]

"In the Morning we fell to rummaging for what we could get; some of us were so Mad that if they happen'd to get a Bag of Dollars, which they could not easily manage, they would give it a rip and hussel [sic] them out until they could, never minding what they left behind. We found a few Hogs and some fine Poultry, which we carous'd with jovially. There is no fresh Water in the Town. Other Liquors we had enough of, most of the Houses here selling Wine or Brandy. We likewise took about a Dozen Indian Women; to these we gave no Quarter, tho' they begged hard for it, but sacrificed all."

After three days of pillaging the storehouses, the Spanish prisoners were put on shore, five ships in the harbor and the whole town were set on fire and the fleet sailed away by the light of the flames for a much needed change of scenery.

"The Booty we got here, exclusive of the Plunder already mentioned amounted to about 32,000 l. Sterling in Gold and Silver Coin, and wrought Plate, beside some Gold Watches, Buckles, Snuff Boxes, Jewels, etc. the Value unknown. I believe if the Enemy had not been somewhat apprehensive of our Visit, we should have met with a much greater Booty, it being imagin'd that the King's Treasure which had been shipp'd from Lima for Panama, and landed here with a Design to be again shipp'd for Panama in the Brandy Bark which we now had possession of, had, together with most





View of the Port of Acapulco

of the Treasure belonging to private Persons, been sent up the Country far enough out of our Reach."

Heading north, the fleet consisting of the *Centurion*, the *Trial's Prize*, the *Carmella*, the *Carmen*, and the bark from Payta stopped at the Isle of Quibo for a few days to water and clean ships. The *Gloucester* was off cruising on her own.

It was then into December 1741 and the only prize seen or taken was a small bark, the *Jesus of Nazareth*, from Panama to Cheripe. Taking her cargo and a gold chain and a small sum of money they sunk her.

A new year, 1742, started and found the ships cruising off the port of Acapulco waiting for the annual Manila galleon to put to sea. For two

months they laid in wait outside the harbor and finally picked up three Negro fishermen in a canoe. From the fishermen Anson learned that, "the Manila ship arrived 9th Jan. [Old Stile] while we had missed her by our stopping at Quibo, as we did not arrive until Jan. 29th. We learned that the galleon was unloaded and most of it with the Merchants had left Town, she was now taking in her Lading of Money, Plate, etc. for Manila and was to sail in about a month. She was a larger ship than the *Gloucester* and had between 40 and 60 Brass Cannon and 500 Men; the Harbour was fortified along the Water's edge with 5 or 6 Batteries and thirteen more 5 gun Batteries were being erected. The Town had 1000 Militia, 200 regular Troops and a number of Indians with



Bows and Arrows. They had heard of our taking Payta and the Prizes and had Scouts and Sentinels watching for us along the coast."

By this time it was into Spring and by May "the Commodore resolved not to wait for any Return from Acapulco, but gave orders to equip two large Prize Launches, to carry on Shore the Spanish and Indian Prisoners; and giving them Provisions and all Necessities for Panama, whither they intended, they left us, to the number of about sixty Persons, having first, tho' Enemies, observed the Custom of Seafaring People at parting, and wish'd each other a good Voyage."

The Trial's Prize, the Carmella and the Carmen were burned and scuttled, so that the surviving members of the crews were all on the Centurion and the Gloucester, which were both well loaded with booty. Here the author's all digress and give an explanation and description of trade and commodities which is interesting.

"From the best Accounts I could procure, the Trade of Chili, whatever it may have been formerly, is at present of very little Value; their Gold and Silver Mines are almost entirely exhausted, and no new ones have been of late discovered; so that if the Spaniards receive any from thence, they must buy it from the Natives, who keep the Secret of procuring it pretty much in their own Power.

"The Commodities exported from Mexico, known at present by the Name of New Spain, are chiefly Gold and Silver in Bars, Lumps, and Specie, Viz. Mill'd Dollars, Doubloons, and Pistoles, some precious Stones, Pearls, etc. Balm, Cochineal, Sarsaparilla, Mechoacan Roots, Brimstone, Furs, Raw Silk, Wool, Sugar and Cacao Nuts.

"While I am on this Article of Trade, it may not be improper to give an Account of that carried on between this Kingdom and Manila, which, for the small number of Ships employ'd in it, is certainly by much the largest in the

World. There never are more than three Ships annually employ'd in this Trade, generally two, some Years but one, and as they report, once in five or six Years they entirely fail, perhaps for want of Silver to carry it on constantly; for the Desire of the Mexicans, as well as of the Peruvians, for Extravagance in Finery and a gay Magnificence is never to be satisfied.

"These Ships set sail from Acapulco about the latter End of March, it being the best Season for their Passage to the East-Indies; they always touch at the Island of Guam to refresh. They generally make this run in about sixty Days and having refresh'd themselves, proceed thence for Manila, where they arrive in May or June, or as late as August. The Cargoes these Ships take in for Manila is chiefly Silver in mill'd Dollars, of scarce ever one of them takes in less than a Million, and often three or four times that Quantity. The Nuestra Senhora Cabadonga, which we took, had about a Million and three hundred Thousand which came to Account; and her Officers reported, that the Nuestra Senhora del Pillar, which passed by about a Month before them, had near four Times that Quantity; and that, had we met with and taken her, we should have found Treasure enough to have maintain'd a War for four Years both with Spain and France."

Off went Anson and the Centurion and Gloucester for China. By August 1742, the Gloucester's rigging was in tatters from storms and her hull was so rotten that it hardly held together. Men from the Centurion were put on board and an endeavor was made to keep her afloat. For a few days she was towed by the Centurion but was then cut adrift. At last the officers of the Gloucester, held a consultation and on August 15, 1742 addressed a plea for help to Comm. Anson; "there was a crew left of 70 Men, 18 Boys and 2 Prisoners, including the Officers, out of which number, only sixteen Men and eleven Boys

are able to keep the Deck, and they are very infirm. For this 24 hours, Officers, Men and Boys without Distinction, have work'd at the Pumps increasingly, and are so fatigued they can stand no longer; and they having still seven Foot Water in the Hold and the Salt Water being over the Casks, so that they cannot get at the Fresh Water to Drink."

Anson gave orders to remove the treasure and cargo from the Gloucester: her survivors joined the Centurion's and she was set on fire at sea, her powder magazine blew up and she sank, leaving only the Centurion and the small Spanish bark from Payta to continue the voyage.

With most of the men either down or dying with scurvy, the Centurion got to the island of Tinian where tents were erected on shore and the ill were landed to recuperate. While the Centurion cruised around the Ladrones, the disabled fed on bread fruit, oranges, lemons, and fish and some recovered. Others, too far gone, died. An attempt to fix up the bark was made, and off they went again for China.

Early in November 1742 the ship reached Macao, a small island south of Canton, China, where there was a Portuguese fort and settlement. Here they stayed until the middle of April 1743. Anson called on the Chinese authorities in Canton, and occasionally entertained some high Chinese official on shipboard. The Centurion was completely rerigged and with Chinese labor, resheathed, caulked and tarred. "At Canton the Inhabitants never having seen an European Man of War before in these Parts, judged our Ship to be a Pyrate; and that as the Commodore and his Men passed along the Streets, they would throw Stones at them, calling them Ladronc, which signifies a Thief and a Robber."

On the 19th of April, 1743 they weighed and went to sea, the crew not knowing where they were going. A day or so out the Commodore "call'd

all the Ship's Company on the Quarter-Deck, and there in a short Speech acquainted them with his Design: [to capture the annual Manila galleon], adding, that he understood that some Reports tending to intimidate the People had been spread among them, as that the Manila Ship was so very strong, and her Sides so thick, that no Shot would penetrate them; but the Reports were vain and groundless, and he resolved to be so near her, that his Shot should go thro' both Sides at once, and in this he was full as good as his Word, when we afterwards met her. This Speech much reviv'd the Spirits of the People, who were really weary of this fatiguing and tedious Voyage, and began to long after their Homes; but this filled them with the Hopes of Riches, and made them eager to encounter new Difficulties and Dangers."

While waiting at sea for the Manila ship the crew exercised and practiced with their pistols, guns and cutlasses. Anson was wise enough to be sure his men were trained and suspected that two Spanish ships might show up instead of one, on account of the previous year's ship not making the trip.

That Anson had planned well was proven when on Monday, 20 June [1743] the long awaited Manila ship was sighted.

"At 7 in the Morning we saw the Land bearing South West about 7 Leagues; at the same Time we saw a Ship bearing South East, which proved to be the Galleon so long expected, and accordingly we informed the Commodore of it, who at first Sight thro' his Glass imagining there were two of them, with great Sedateness and Composure said, 'My Lads, we'll fight them both.' But as she came nearer we perceived there was but one Vessel. On this we cleared Ship, and prepared to give Chace, and the Commodore gave particular Orders to his Officers with the Composure and Serenity of a Hero. The Spanish Admiral saved us the Trouble of giving



much Chace, and bore down upon us before the Wind. When she was come a little more than half a Mile from us, she brought to, in order to engage us. In a little Time after she fired a Gun: we answer'd her with a Gun to the Leeward. At half an Hour after 10 the Chace hoisted Spanish Colours and a red Flag, with the Spanish Arms at her Main Topmast-Head, and fired a Gun to Leeward. We hauled our Long Boat and moored her a-stern. Several Shot were discharged on both Sides before we came to a close Attack. At half an Hour after Noon we hoisted our Colours and fired a shot at the Chace, which she returned. We now came close along Side of each other, Yard-Arm and Yard-Arm, and began the Engagement. The Commodore during all the Time of Action stood upon the Deck, with his Sword drawn, in the thickest of the Fire, and the Smoke of the Powder almost smothered him. . . . As we had no extraordinary Stock of Ammunition on Board, we were ordered not to be lavish of it, and to fire no Gun, but what we were sure would do Execution; for which Reason we seldom fired above four at a Time, which Generally went thro' and thro' their Ship, and killed great Numbers. The Spaniards having near 600 men, standing very thick on the Deck, scarce a Shot missed them. During the Engagement we frequently made use of an excellent Feint, which was by lashing our Spritsail-yard fore and aft, as if we were about to board her, which made the Spaniards imagine the Commodore had recruited himself with Sailors in his Voyage and did not a little contribute to their surrendering; besides this, our engaging them Yard-arm and Yard-arm within less than Pistol Shot, was of great Service to us, as it gave us an Opportunity of Shewing all our Crew, which tho' it consisted only of two hundred and twenty seven Men, struck a great Terror into them: For seeing all these on one Side of the Ship only, they concluded the Commodore

had his full compliment of Men, which certainly induced them to strike the sooner; whereas had we fought Broad-side and Broadside, we must have wanted Men to manage our Guns, and so, by discovering our weakness, should have been more in Danger of being overpowered by their superior Numbers. After a sharp Engagement of an Hour and twenty Minutes, the Spaniard struck her Standard at the Maintopmast Head, her Ensign Staff being shot away. We had two men killed and Lieut. Brett and 15 men wounded, tho' none mortally. On the Spanish Ship striking, we hoisted out our Cutter [the rest of the Boats being rendered unservicable in the Engagement] and sent her on Board with Lieut. Saumarez to take Possession of her; there being but little Wind, she fell on Board us, but soon cleared: our Cutter returned with the Gov. of Guam, the Prize's Pilot, and some of the principal Officers and Passengers. The General, or Commander in Chief, named Don Geronimo Montero, a Portuguese, being wounded in two Places, could not safely be remov'd, but all possible Care was taken of him on Board the Ship. We continued employing our Cutter and the Prize's Long Boat in bringing the Prisoners to our Vessel, and sent on Board 50 Men with a Lieutenant to secure the Prize and Prisoners left in her, together with two Surgeons to take Care of the wounded. We likewise sent on Board the Spaniard some Blocks and Coils of Ropes to repair her Rigging, it being much damaged, and great part of it shot to Pieces, as also were her Masts: she had 150 Shot passed thro' her Hull, many of them being between Wind and Water, which made her very leaky: her Masts and Hull laying up North East off North. Having received on Board our Ship 300 of the Prisoners, we sent the Long Boat and Cutter to bring off also the Money. The Prize was called the *Neustra Signora de Cabadonga* and came from Acapulco, bound for Manila: her lading was chiefly Money, Plate, and

*An Account of the Treasure taken in the Nuestra Signora del Buono Carmella in the South-Seas, by His Majesty's Ship the Centurion, September 12, 1741.*

N <sup>o</sup> . Boxes	Oz. Troy	N <sup>o</sup> . Boxes	Oz. Troy	N <sup>o</sup> . Boxes	Oz. Troy
1	6756	6	4860	11	4388
2	6376	7	4871	12	4394
3	4716	8	4948	13	5036
4	4860	9	4456	14	924
5	3966	10	4944	Plate	180

All this, except the Plate, was in Dollars, which together valued at 5s. 5d. per Ounce, amounts to 17,786*l.* 19*s.* 7*d.* beside which there were Gold Rings, Chains, Ear-rings, Jewels, Gold and Silver Lace and Twist, with many other valuable Commodities, the Account of which never came to my Knowledge.

*An Account of the Treasure taken at the sack of the Town of Païta, by His Majesty's Ships Centurion and Tryall's Prize, November 13, 1741.*

N <sup>o</sup> . Boxes	Oz. Troy
1	4500
2	4456
3	4484
4	3600
5	4500
6	4844
7	4500

This valued the same as above, amounts 8364*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* to which adding 4721 Double Loons at 3*l.* 8*s.* each, makes the whole Amount 24,415*l.* 16*s.* 4*d.* I know not certainly whether there was any thing in Specie farther in this Capture, not being able to come at any other Accounts than those before us; but I know that it was generally esteemed to be near 32,000*l.* Sterling, exclusive of Jewells, Gold Snuff Boxes, Buckles, and the like, which I know not how disposed of. We had several small Prizes more in those Seas, and one very considerable one, in the Ship *Del Carmen*, but principally in Goods, and turned to but very small Account.

*An Account of the Treasure taken from on board the Ship Nuestra Signora de Cabadonga, from Acapulca for Manilla, by his Majesty's Ship Centurion, June 20, 1743.*

Spanish Dollars secured in 256 Boxes 1,278,546 Wrought Plate and Virgin Silver 1324½*l.* Troy. The Ship and remaining Part of her Cargo amounted to 6000 Dollars.

This at 4*s.* 9*d.* ¼ per Dollar, and 5*s.* per Ounce for the Wrought Plate and Virgin Silver, which I think very moderate, amounts to 313,121*l.* 7*s.* 7*d.* ¼. What other valuable Effects were in this Prize I cannot account for, no more having come to my Knowledge.

The whole Amount of those Three Prizes in Specie and Plate } 355,324*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* ¼

And here, tho' the others were Prizes in which we of the *Centurion* claim no Interest, I shall subjoin the Account I have received of such Prizes as were taken by the *Tryall* and *Gloucester*, independent of us and of each other.

*An Account of the Treasure taken by his Majesty's Sloop the Tryall from on board the Spanish Prize the Arinzarie taken in the South-Seas.*

N<sup>o</sup> Boxes  
 1 Plate, 45*l.* Troy  
 2 Dollars 540*l.* Troy and Double Loons 2014.  
 3 Dollars 160*l.* Troy, and Plate 60*l.* 9 Oz. of the same Weight.

*An Account of the Treasure taken by the Gloucester in the South-Seas, as taken on Account of on board the Centurion on the Loss of the Gloucester.*

Numbers and Things containing	Loofe Plate, Av. W.	Double Loons	Guineas	Pistols	Dollars	Ryalls
1 A small Chest of Gold		4041 ½		58		
2 1 Ditto of Silver						
3 Ditto						
4 Ditto, with a small Box of Jewels, and a Bag of Bits						
5 A small Chest	49 ½ <i>l.</i>		2		1264	1 Bag
6 Ditto	117 ½ <i>l.</i>					
7 A Box of Gold and Silver Lace						
The whole Am <sup>t</sup>	167 <i>l.</i>	4041 ½	2	58	11264	1 Bag



Virgin Silver; she could mount 60 Guns, but had but forty two, seventeen of which were Brass, and 28 Patereroes, each of which was loaded with seventy Musket Balls, or their equivalent in old rusty Nails, Flint Stones, and Shot cast into four Quarters, like Slugs; they likewise shot Chain Shot, and other Things at us esteem'd unlawful; but availed little, we keeping a continual Fire, which the Enemy returned very briskly for the first Hour, but afterwards she lay like a Mark to be fired at, only firing now and then. We killed about 70 of her Men, and wounded as many more. We had in our Ship at that Time only about 227 Men, of whom about 200 were English, and a great many of them Boys. . . . The Spanish General, having heard of our ill Condition at Tenian, made sure of taking us. He had provided a Netting-deck to prevent our boarding him. The greatest Damage we received was in having our Foremast, Mainmast, and Bowsprit somewhat wounded and our Rigging shattered. Our Ship received only fifteen Shot thro' her Hull, and had no more than two Men killed, viz. Thomas Richmond, and George Walton, the former having his Head shot off by a nine Pound Shot. We found on Board the Ship 112 Bags and 6 Chests of Dollars, and one Bag of Plate. We expended in taking the Prize, 24 Barrels of Powder, 5000 lb. of round Shot, 4 Rounds of Grape, and 4 of double Headed."

Having thus completed the main part of their cruise, the crew cheerfully went to work on a pleasant task of taking out the treasure.

Wednesday, 22. . . . "began transporting the Money from her on board us."

Thursday, 23. ". . . still agreeably employed in taking the Money out of the Prize. . . ."

Saturday, 25. ". . . brought on Board us from the Prize, by a moderate Computation, two hundred and eighty two

Thousand Dollars, with some wrought Plate."

Sunday, 26. ". . . We were all this Day employ'd in transporting Money from the Prize to our Ship, having now receiv'd on Board, in all thirteen hundred thousand Dollars, with some wrought Plate. . . ."

Monday, 27. ". . . This Day we received on Board from the Prize one Bag of Dollars and five Parcels of Plate, with 28 Brass Patereroes. . . ."

Wednesday, 29. . . . "receiv'd on Board, from our Prize fifteen Bags of Dollars and some Plate, with three small casks of Virgin Silver. . . ."

Thursday, 4 August. . . . "receiv'd from the Prize a Box of Plate and Virgin Silver."

Tuesday, 9. . . . "At seven in the Morning we put seventy Bags of Dollars into Boxes."

Wednesday, 10. . . . "This Day we put sixty more Bags of Dollars into Boxes."

Thursday, 1 Sept. [1743] "This Day we made a Division of Prize Money; the whole Sum divided was two thousand three hundred and twenty Dollars; it being part of the Cabadonga's Money."

Saturday, 12 Oct. "We were now employ'd on board in counting our Money, washing it, and putting it into Boxes; and the Carpenters were at work in building Bulk-heads in each Side of the Well for the Security of the Money."

Sunday, 23. "We were employ'd in stowing the Money in the Hold, having compleated weighing it: We found we had taken in the Cabadonga, one Million, two Hundred and seventy eight Thousand, five Hundred and forty six Dollars, in two Hundred and fifty six Boxes, and One Thousand, twenty four Pounds and half Troy weight of Virgin and wrought Silver.

Stopping again at Macao to leave their prisoners the Centurion and her Prize went into the river below Canton

and stayed until the 6th of December 1743. They beautified the Centurion with paint and cleaned her up like a new ship and came back to England by way of the Cape of Good Hope.

From the London Gazette, June 16, 1744. The Cargo which Commodore Anson has brought home with him is as follows, viz. 2,600,000 Pieces of Eight, 150,000 Ounces of Plate, 10 Bars of Gold, and a large Quantity of Gold and Silver Dust; in the whole to the Amount of 1,250,000 l. Sterling.

London Gazette, June 17, 1744. Commod. Anson and Adm. Lestock, arriv'd in Town from Portsmouth.

Tuesday 19, June 1744. A Waggon laden with Silver was brought from on board the Centurion Commodore Anson, to the Bank under a strong Guard.

Wednesday, July 4. Passed thro' St. James-street, the Strand, Cheapside, etc. in their Way to the Tower, 32 Waggon from Portsmouth, with the Treasure brought home by Admiral Anson; they were guarded by the Ship's Crew [which consisted of many Nations] and preceded by the Officers, with Swords drawn, Musick playing and Colours flying, particularly that of the Aquapulca Prize.

Thursday, 5th. Sixty Dutch Sailors who entered on Board the Centurion at the Cape [Good Hope], were paid 50 Dollars each, besides their common Wages.

Thursday, Nov. 1st, 1744.

Yesterday the crew of the Centurion receiv'd 300 l. one s. each as part of their Prize Money; after which about forty of them attended by fiddlers, bagpipers, etc. [could this mean girls?] with cockades in their hats, went to Stratford to regale themselves. [The pretty Polls, God bless 'em, probably had the 300 l. and the jolly Tars had the 1 s. left, on the Nov. 2nd following but here the newspapers are silent.]

Commodore Anson was immediately promoted to Rear Admiral, resigned as he objected to the treatment of some of

his officers but was later made Admiral and did much to improve the lot of the sailor during his time. He put the British Navy into a far better condition than it had been for years and was one of the smartest and best liked Admirals England ever had. Had his name ANSON been put on the coinage instead of LIMA there would have been no confusion as to where the bullion came from but this however would have been against all rules of the time.

#### References to the LIMA coinage

Charles Oman—*The Coinage of England*. Oxford 1931 pp 351-352.

The system of indicating the provenance of the metal that came to the mint by special means, which had become the rule under Anne, continued through the reign of Geo. II. . . . an issue in 1745 and 1746 of 5 guinea, guinea, and ½ guinea pieces with LIMA under the King's head. This was struck from Admiral Anson's booty from the Pacific, where in his long and adventurous voyage of over three years he captured much specie in the Peruvian port of Paita, and still more in the Acapulco Galleon: the annual treasure ship which sailed from that port in Mexico to Manila, with the collected output of the American mines. Anson is said to have taken 180,000 'piastres' in Paita and 1,500,000 in the Galleon altogether equivalent of 500,000 l. Both metals were represented in the total and the mint struck a very large issue from the proceeds. Silver predominated, but the gold was no negligible sum. Why LIMA was chosen for the differentiating inscription is a mystery, as that city was not captured and the gold came from Acapulco not from Peru.

Edw. Hawkins—*The Silver Coins of England*. 3rd ed. London 1887.

George II ascended the throne upon the death of his father in 1727. No change whatever took place in the denominations, size, value or fineness of the silver money. The nature of the



types, too, continued the same, and with similar symbols; Roses for West of England silver; plumes for silver imported by the Company of Copper Miners in the Principality of Wales; roses and plumes for silver of the Company for melting down lead; and LIMA under the King's bust upon those pieces which were struck from the silver which was captured, according to Mr. Pollet, by the Prince Frederic and Duke privateers. According to other authorities they were coined from the silver captured by Lord Anson in the great Acapulco galleon. The former tradition is the more probable, for Acapulco is the capital of Mexico, and Lima, which is the capital of Peru, would very inconsistently be inscribed upon Mexican silver.

1745—LIMA ½ Cr., Shil., 6d.

1746—LIMA cr. ½ Cr., Shil., 6d.

Robert Lloyd Kenyon—*The Gold Coins of England*, London 1884. p. 189.

LIMA occurs on coins dated 1745 and 1746, which according to Pollet were made from the bullion captured by the Prince Frederick and Duke, privateers, but according to others from the gold taken by Lord Anson in the great Acapulco galleon which traded between Manila, in the Philippines and Acapulco, in Mexico, exchanging at the latter place the merchandise of Manila for the ore of Peru. This vessel was captured in June 1743; but Anson did not arrive with the treasure in England till June 1744, having previously, during the same voyage captured a considerable quantity of bullion in a ship bound from Callao, which is the port of Lima, to Valparaiso, and a much larger quantity in the Peruvian town of Paita. On all the bullion so captured the name of Lima, the capital of Peru, might not inappropriately be inscribed.

GOLD:

5 guineas 1746 LIMA. Rud. xviii. 13.

2 guineas 1746 LIMA. Rud. xviii. 14  
[may be imaginary].

1 guineas 1746 LIMA.

½ guineas 1746 LIMA.

Herbert A. Grueber—*Handbook of the Coins of Great Britain and Ireland in the British Museum*, London 1899.

Geo. II . . . other gold and silver coins of 1745 & 1746, with the old portrait of the King and with LIMA under the bust were struck from bullion taken by Admiral Anson from the Spaniards in South America during his famous voyage round the world.

Geo. C. Brooke—*English Coins from the Seventh Century to the Present Day*. N. Y. 1932. pp 223.

. . . "and the coins made from the Spanish gold and silver were marked with the name VIGO under the Queen's bust; similarly "LIMA" denotes coins struck from the treasure of 1,500,000 specie brought back by Anson on his return in 1744 from the voyage round the world."

Henry Noel Humphreys—*Coinage of the British Empire*, London 1855. pp 133.

The word LIMA occurs on those coins minted from the silver captured either by Lord Anson, in the great Acapulco galleon, or, as some think, by the Prince Frederic and Duke privateers.

Lieut. Col. H. W. Morrieson, R.A. Librarian—*The Influence of War on the Coinage of England in Brit. Numis. Journal* 1st Ser. Vol. IV 1907. p 11.

The next event to interest us is the appearance of the word LIMA under the bust of George II on the coins dated 1745, 1746. The country was then at war with France and Spain. These coins were struck from the bullion which was captured, according to Mr. Pollet, by the Prince Frederick and Duke privateers. According to other authorities they were coined from the specie captured by Lord Anson in the Pacific Ocean.

It is curious that this point has never been settled. Anson returned from his famous cruise in 1744, in the course of which he had raided the coast of Peru and taken several rich prizes. On his way home, off the Philippine Islands, he, after several weeks of waiting, fell in with and captured the great galleon *Nuestra Senora de Cavadonga* from Acapulco containing treasure to the value of one and a half millions of dollars. His arrival in England was marked with great rejoicing, and he was immediately promoted Rear-Admiral. To me, it appears much more likely that the specie so obtained by an official expedition would be specially marked, rather than that captured by two obscure privateers. No better name could have been selected than LIMA, the chief town on that part of the Pacific Coast of America where Anson had so successfully flaunted his country's flag. Hawkins is, however, of the other opinion, on the ground that Acapulco is not in Peru, and that Mexican silver could hardly have been stamped with the name of a Peruvian town.

J. Allan, M.A. *Deputy Keeper of Coins and Medals, British Mus. in Ency. Britt. Vol. 16.*

The coinage of the 18th century calls for no remark; one may just mention the practice of recording the provenance of the metal of particular issues as in the VIGO issues of Anne struck from captured Spanish bullion in 1702, the Welsh Copper Co. shillings of Geo. I<sup>st</sup> and the LIMA coinage of Geo. II made from bullion brought by Anson from his voyage round the world.

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J. Allan. Under Numismatics. *Ency. Britt.* Vol. 16.

Believe bullion came from Anson cruise, Oman, Allan, Morrieson, Kenyon, Grueber, Brooke.

Believe bullion came from privateers Duke and Frederick, Pollet, Hawkins.

[Note by compiler. From the records of the cruise examined and list of bullion taken on Anson's cruise, I would suggest that as it was nearly all silver that the gold came from the privateers Frederick and Duke. Have no records of what part of their booty was in gold but presumably it was much more than Anson took. As they arrived back in England in 1745 and Anson in 1744 bullion from both trips could have been minted as practically all of it both silver and gold came from Peru and could have been marked LIMA with justification. R. I. Nesmith].



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